

Sharing...the Journey

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Former U.S. President, Bill Clinton's 2007 book on "Giving: How each of us can change the world," provides a simple yet powerful message of hope, optimism, and change. Throughout the book, Clinton effectively captures a giving spirit through dozens of interesting, short stories. As an example, people like John Wood are quitting their jobs at Microsoft in order to build thousands of libraries as well as computer and language labs, while making available educational scholarships to children in such places as Nepal, Laos, India, Cambodia, and Vietnam in a program called Room to Read. To make this program work, there are thousands of other givers who donate books, software, money, and other resources for Room to Read libraries and educational programming. In addition to Wood, there is Woods, or I should say, Tiger Woods (the legendary golfer), who founded the Woods Center where volunteers offer math, science, and technology mentoring to youth of Southern California. Of course, Clinton also highlights AmeriCorps; an organization he was instrumental in creating back in 1993 when president. As he notes, AmeriCorps teachers travel to places such as South Africa, inner city Los Angeles, and hurricane damaged New Orleans to give their time, talents, and educational services. He also documents global organizations such as Vital Voices which is dedicated to building future women leaders around the world. As an example, Vital Voices provides leadership and business training, conferences on women's rights, legal services, and various other educational supports to nurture the hopes, dreams, and entrepreneurial spirit of women in Afghanistan as well as those in other parts of the world.

Reading pages of the book is certain to turn any reader into a giver. President Clinton's awe-inspiring compilation of riveting stories draws the reader to visions of how giving something, however seemingly small or inconsequential at the time, can make a huge difference. People around the world are contributing to efforts to diminish world pollution, discover cures for prostate cancer and AIDS, bring attention to the need for global peace, and provide support to victims of natural disasters and emergencies such as those devastated by the major tsunami that hit South and Southeast Asia on Sunday December 26, 2004 as well as those caught in Hurricane Katrina just 8 months later. Included in this book are stories about those giving some aspect of their lives for just such types of issues and causes.

Each of us has something to give—time before or after work, physical labor and sweat, innovative ideas and other types of mental effort, money and tangible materials, and unique talents and skills—that can make a positive impact on the inhabitants of this planet. In parallel to acts of giving there typically is some sense of sharing—the sharing of stories, visions, kindness, wealth, sense of duty, resources, etc. Indeed, sharing is a

